

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (previously presented): An inductance measurement circuit for measuring an inductance of a wire-loop, said inductance measurement circuit comprising:

- a pair of driver circuits in electrical communication with a wire-loop;
- a demodulation circuit in electrical communication with said pair of driver circuits, said demodulation circuit producing a demodulated signal;
- and

- means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal in electrical communication with said pair of driver circuits, said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal producing a digitized signal representing an inductance measured of the wire-loop.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 further comprising an amplifier circuit in electrical communication between said demodulation circuit and said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal, said amplifier producing an amplified signal.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 further comprising a pre-amplifier circuit in electrical communication between said pair of driver circuits and said demodulation circuit.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said pair of driver circuits operate at a fixed-frequency.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said demodulation circuit includes a demodulation oscillator, said demodulation circuit producing an output derived from said pair of driver circuits and said demodulation oscillator.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 5 wherein said output is a demodulated signal substantially corresponding to an envelope of the combined RLC waveform.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 further comprising a filter which removes noise substantially outside a selected frequency range of the inductance measurement circuit, said filter in communication between said demodulation circuit and said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal.

Claim 8 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said demodulation circuit is a synchronous demodulator.

Claim 9 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 8 wherein said synchronous demodulator includes a plurality of analog switches.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 8 wherein said demodulation circuit and said pair of driver circuits operate at substantially the same frequency.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 further comprising a dc voltage offset generator for producing a dc offset voltage and a signal conditioning circuit in electrical communication between said demodulation circuit and said dc voltage offset generator, said signal conditioning circuit removing said dc voltage from said demodulated signal thereby allowing said demodulated signal to be amplified without saturating.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said pair of driver circuits include a pair of resistance-capacitance networks, each of said pair of resistance-capacitance networks driven by a multi-state buffer, each of said pair of resistance-capacitance networks having a resistance.

Claim 13 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 12 wherein each of said pair of resistance-capacitance networks has a large apparent impedance.

Claim 14 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 12 wherein each of said pair of resistance-capacitance networks is balanced using said multi-state buffer to modulate said resistance.

Claim 15 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 15 wherein said multi-state buffer is driven at a high rate compared to a desired sinusoidal frequency by a duty cycle controlled voltage.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein the wire-loop is directly coupled to said pair of driver circuits.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 further comprising a transformer coupling the wire-loop to said pair of driver circuits, said transformer rejecting a common-mode noise originating from the wire-loop.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal is a delta-sigma analog-to-digital converter.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said pair of driver circuits is driven by a differential, periodic waveform.

Claim 20 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 19 wherein said periodic waveform is a sine wave.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 19 wherein said periodic waveform is substantially a square wave, said square wave having a frequency substantially similar to an operating frequency of said pair of driver circuits.

Claim 22 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said dc offset generator includes a digital-to-analog converter.

Claim 23 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said dc offset generator uses pulse width modulation to adjust a duty cycle of a square wave.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal includes a voltage reference input, said inductance measurement circuit further comprising a signal generator connected to said voltage reference input, an output of said signal generator selected to match a characteristic of internal noise in said inductance measurement circuit.

Claim 25 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein a plurality of said inductance measurement circuits are operating in close proximity, each of said plurality of said inductance measurement circuits operating at a unique carrier frequency and in a distinct frequency band from other closely proximate said inductance measurement circuits.

Claim 26 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 25 wherein each said carrier frequency is separated from each said carrier frequency of a proximate said inductive measurement circuit to provide sufficient bandwidth for operation.

Claim 27 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 25 wherein each said carrier frequency is separated from each other said carrier frequency by between approximately 50 to approximately 1200 Hertz.

Claim 28 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said demodulation circuit is a full-wave bridge rectifier.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 further comprising a heating element in close proximity to a capacitor of said pair of driver circuits.

Claim 30 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 29 wherein said heating element is thermally coupled to said capacitor.

Claim 31 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 29 wherein said heating element is a resistor connected to a variable current source.

Claim 32 (original): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 31 wherein said resistor and said capacitor are thermally insulated to improve thermal efficiency.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal includes a low-pass filter.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein said means for converting an analog signal into a digital signal includes differential inputs and rejects a common-mode noise applied to said inductance measurement circuit by the wire-loop.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The inductance measurement circuit of Claim 1 wherein a characteristic of at least one said pair of driver circuits is modulated to balance said pair of driver circuits for common-mode noise rejection.

Claim 36 (previously presented): An inductance measurement circuit for measuring an inductance of a wire-loop, said inductance measurement circuit comprising:

- a pair of driver circuits in electrical communication with a wire-loop;
- a demodulation circuit in electrical communication with said pair of ~~resistance-inductance-capacitance~~ driver circuits, said demodulation circuit producing a demodulated signal; and
- a filter in electrical communication with said demodulation circuit, said filter producing a filtered signal.

Claim 37 (previously presented): An inductance measurement circuit for measuring an inductance of a wire-loop, said inductance measurement circuit comprising:

- a pair of driver circuits in electrical communication with a wire-loop;
- a demodulation circuit in electrical communication with said pair of driver circuits, said demodulation circuit producing a demodulated signal;

a filter in electrical communication with said demodulation circuit, said filter producing a filtered signal; and

an analog-to-digital converter converting an analog signal into a digital signal in electrical communication with said filter, said analog-to-digital converter producing a digitized signal representing an inductance measured of the wire-loop.

Claim 38 (currently amended): An inductance measurement circuit for measuring an inductance of a wire-loop, said inductance measurement circuit comprising:

a pair of driver circuits in electrical communication with a wire-loop;

a demodulation circuit in electrical communication with said pair of ~~resistance-inductance-capacitance~~ driver circuits, said demodulation circuit producing a demodulated signal; and

an analog-to-digital converter converting an analog signal into a digital signal in electrical communication with said demodulation circuit, said analog-to-digital converter producing a digitized signal representing an inductance measured of the wire-loop.